

>> STEWART: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Brian Stewart, and I am in the academic dean at Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona. And I'm going to be talking to you a little bit about developing educational programs through community collaboration. So when I said the word "collaboration," I just noticed a lot of you are, like, running for that door right over there. Others of you are really excited and jumping up and down. Now why is that? That's because collaborations, for a lot of us, are sort of like freefall. For some of us, it's very, very exciting. Others of us, it is a terrifying prospect.

But there are many types of collaboration. One type is that partnership that we're all very familiar with. It's usually ordered, organized. There's often like a grant or some type of project with the partner that you're working with. They're often restrictive. That's the downside. But they're something we're very familiar with. Then there's the other side of those, which is the open collaboration, discussion type, often what we're doing here today, is this kind of collaborative effort. Very great at draining our brain; however, we don't always know what we're going to actually do with that information.

And then there's a very rare and special type, which is working on those, yes, that are great for working on grassroots. The grassroots is the one where you see an image behind you, a lot of words sort of make sense but you don't know exactly what it is that you're talking about. But if you work with those, you dig in them, you get downright into those, and you're going to come up with an amazing, beautiful gem, some type of treasure that you didn't expect when you originally started.

However this kind of grassroots collaboration is also one of the most difficult. You're resource low. You have people that are changing constantly. It often feels like you are trying to build a rocket ship with nothing but spare parts. Those spare parts, however, those kinds of efforts that you are doing is what, in the end, when you endure, when you make it to the end, you feel like you have just won some type of amazing competition and you've done it through the sheer force of your willpower. That kind of collaboration is what we've been a part of. That kind of collaboration is what developed a behavioral health pathway in Tucson. That behavioral health pathway was developed purely from a community effort, because the State of Arizona was changing the rules regarding behavioral health specialists.

There's a list of partners that you can see up there. A lot of people were involved. They really tried to focus it, first, by going for a grant; however, like all grassroots partnerships, the image that they saw was very different for different people. The picture wasn't the same, depending upon who you asked. Finally, after a lot of work, two years of work, mind you, they came up with a pathway, the pathway with 18 credits, nine months of training, it involved a partner with the community in order to tie it right back to that industry, and the success was 80% of the students in the first one completed on time. Only one student dropped out. That collaborative still exists today. It is run by a collaboration. Even though we're involved in the college, we don't run it. We're just part of the collaborative effort. They brainstorm. They meet every month. They make sure that this is a success.

Now what did we learn from this process? Well the first thing that we learned is that graduations are really excited. We love graduations. But there are also five takeaways that were very, very important that any grassroots collaborative, or any collaborative you go into, could really help you endure. The first one is create order from chaos. That was the very first thing they had to do, was figure out an image, a plan, a goal, much like writing a grant. They did that, and they were able to create a structure. Until that happened, it was just chaos.

The second thing they had to do was learn that limitations exist. We have to acknowledge them, but you have to push through them. You've got to endure those scrapes in order to get to the other side. And then that came to the next item, number three, which is you have to have resources. Those came from marketing. That's where HPOG came in. Before that, HPOG wasn't involved. And what we discovered is that HPOG had a lot of resources. They had people. They had marketing power. That was able to really elevate the program up to an entirely new level.

Of course then it comes to number four, remembering the community and the partnership. This picture here is a picture of the pavilion in which the students go to school. This is not on a campus. This is out in the community. Across the street is the Pima County One-Stop system where students often start their experience.

The last item, number five, is that you're going to have an amazing unexpected success, and you've got to acknowledge that success. In our case, it was those students who finished better than we could have ever expected them to do, the ones that got the raises and promotions, because this was tied right back to their employment in the industry.

In summary, five things to make sure that an industry is successful when you're looking at a partnership; organize the chaos, limit but push through them, market, remember those community partners, and, of course, celebrate. Celebrate these successes. Thank you very much. I look forward to speaking with you.